
1933 Lagonda M45

Lot sold	USD 266 377 - 332 971 GBP 200 000 - 250 000 (listed)	Condition	Used
Year of manufacture	1933	Location	
Chassis number	Z10528	Exterior colour	Other
Lot number	222		

Description

1933 Lagonda 4½-Litre M45 Tourer

Registration no. AUU 332

Chassis no. Z10528

"Lagonda cars have always upheld a reputation for effortless fast touring and the pride of ownership which fine detail work and distinguished coachbuilding can give. The 4½-Litre model retains these characteristics, but scores considerably over its forebears by its high power-to-weight ratio. The chassis is no bigger than the three litre car, and there is no suggestion of clumsiness, heavy steering or the other drawbacks which often accompany the large engined car." - Motor Sport, January 1934.

The 4½-Litre Lagonda was one of the most accomplished sports cars of the 1930s, as a succession of high-profile race wins, culminating in victory at Le Mans in 1935, amply demonstrates. In 1934 a team of three specially prepared short-chassis cars (effectively the soon-to-be-announced M45 Rapide) prepared by Lagonda main agents Fox & Nicholl performed creditably at the RAC Tourist Trophy at Ards, and the following year one of these TT cars driven by John Hindmarsh and Luis Fontes won the Le Mans 24-Hour endurance classic outright.

The Lagonda car company had been founded in 1906 in Staines, Middlesex by the American Wilbur Gunn (1859-1920) who named it after a river near his home town of Springfield, Ohio. Gunn had started out building motorcycles in the garden of his house in Staines with some success, including winning the 1905 London to Edinburgh Trial. In 1907 he launched his first car and in 1910 won the Moscow to St Petersburg Trial driving a 16/18hp model. Having established its reputation, Lagonda concentrated mainly on the production of light cars before reverting to sporting and luxury models in

the mid-1920s with the introduction of the 14/60.

This four-cylinder, 2.0-litre model was joined in 1929 by the first of Lagonda's own sixes - the 3-Litre - but by the mid-1930s the Meadows-engined cars were seen as the way forward. Introduced at the 1933 Olympia Show and based on the preceding ZM 3-Litre model, the M45 deployed Meadows' 4½-litre, twin-plug six to good effect, saloons being capable of reaching 90mph and tourers 'the ton' under favourable conditions.

"A short run on one of the first of the 4½-Litre Lagonda models, with an open four-seater body, left a vivid impression not only of brilliant acceleration and sheer performance, but of a car delightfully silent and easy running in a way that can be achieved to the fullest extent only by a big-engined machine working well inside its limits," reported The Autocar in 1933. As the foregoing contemporary quote clearly demonstrates, these exceptionally handsome big-engined Lagondas created a considerable impression when new.

'AUU 332' is a very well known M45 Tourer and is considered to be the most original of its type remaining. This car has few modifications but retains its original trim and has a new hood and side screens. 'AUU' underwent a full body-off chassis rebuild in 1999 together with an engine overhaul and rewiring of the electrics. The aforementioned modifications comprise a Sanction 4 crankcase and a modern oil filter and clutch. The body frame is in excellent condition and the car also benefits from a newly re-cored radiator. (The old crankcase with original numbers is included in the sale.)

The current vendor first encountered 'AUU' in 1974 when the car was owned by Raymond Wickham, who lived in Kent and was chairman of the Kent Farmers Association. He had owned the car for a long time and only sold it because of his advancing years. 'AUU' then had two further owners before being bought by Bernd Holthusen in 1991. Bernd produced the famous book Lagonda, and became a great friend of the vendor during the book's production. The vendor became the new owner of 'AUU' by way of a car swap in 1993, selling the Le Mans Lagonda V12 'HPL 448' to Bernd Holthusen in the process.

Since then many European rallies and trips have been undertaken with 'AUU', which according to the vendor has been and still is the most delightful car to drive. Only sold for reasons of his advancing age, this highly original Lagonda M45 tourer is offered with a copy of its factory build sheet; a FIVA identity card; a current MoT; and a V5C Registration Certificate.

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